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Redevelopment Board Minutes 10/29/2007

Arlington Redevelopment Board
Minutes of October 29, 2007

Members Present: Christopher Loreti
Roland Chaput
Andrew West
Edward Tsoi
Bruce Fitzsimmons

Also Present: Kevin J. O'Brien
Laura Wiener
Joey Glushko

Andrew West called the meeting to order at 7:05 and introduced Town Manager, Brian Sullivan to talk with the Board about the leasing of the Parmenter and Crosby School buildings. Brian Sullivan asked that the Board lease the buildings for one year or no more than two years. He explained that the Town wished to consider the question of keeping or disposing of the buildings. He would study the costs of keeping the buildings and the value of disposing of the buildings and bring the question of the building's future to the 2008 Town Meeting. He didn't think that the 2008 Town Meeting would be able to make a final decision, but might be able to recommend that the buildings be permanently declared surplus by the School Committee. If the decision were ultimately made to dispose of the buildings, he felt that the one or two year lease period would give the tenants adequate notice and would not tie the hands of the Town if the decision were to sell the buildings.

The Board was skeptical in light of the discussions of the School Committee which were related to the Town Meeting saying that they felt that three years was necessary to give Tenants adequate notice. After some discussion about the rents and costs associated with the buildings, Roland Chaput moved that the Board lease the buildings for two years with a one year extension decided by mutual agreement. There was no second.

Brian Sullivan left the meeting to attend the Selectmen's meeting already in progress. Kevin O'Brien pointed out that the decision regarding the building finances was the Town Meeting's decision and the ARB was being asked only to decide how long the lease should be. Nevertheless, the Board asked staff to provide additional financial information about the buildings to help the members make their decision. The Board would put off its decision on the length of the lease until it was further considered.

At 8:00, Andrew West recognized Sharon Shaloo who lives on Ravine Street near the Parmenter School building. Ms. Shaloo spoke to the Board about the parking burden that the current use of the building places on the neighborhood. She asked that the Board consider the impact on the neighborhood when considering tenants for the building. She encouraged the Board to create off street parking or at least require a parking plan for prospective tenants.

At 8:15 Kevin O'Brien explained the history of the special permits at the 7 Central Street building that now belongs to Richard Sampson. Mr. Sampson has requested that he be permitted to lease the building to tenants but his permit indicated that he is to use the building as the headquarters for his American Alarm Company and may lease no more than 36% of the building. Kevin O'Brien explained that he thought that the special permit would have to be amended in order for Mr. Sampson to lease the whole building. He also explained that the amount of parking was less than the full building now required and that the existing permit acknowledged that and based the amount of parking on the actual number of spaces that were needed by the particular tenants. Any new leasing of the building may require a new arrangement regarding parking. Ed Tsoi moved that Mr. Sampson ask to amend the permit and propose how he will provide adequate parking for the projected use. Bruce Fitzsimmons seconded the motion and the Board voted 5 to 0 to approve. The Board invited Mr. Sampson to come to speak to the Board before the hearing on his amendment if he likes.

At 8:35 Andrew West turned the Board's attention to the meeting the Board would have with the Selectmen the following Saturday. The Board discussed the topics that the Selectmen had suggested and added a couple of topics it would like to discuss. The Board asked staff to prepare some papers that would outline the topics for its use on Saturday.

Kevin O'Brien reported that he had spoken with Katie Kinnecom as the Board instructed and she indicated she might still be interested in serving on the Symmes Neighborhood Advisory Committee. He also said that he had received an email from Alfonso Sira indicating that he was no longer serving on the SNAC.

Roland Chaput moved that the Board approve the minutes for the October 15 and October 22, 2007 meetings. Chris Loreti seconded the motion and the Board voted 5 to 0 to approve.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin J. O'Brien